

Federal Aid

Fiscal Year 1999 Annual Report Region 3

The Wildlife Restoration Grant is one of two major grant programs administered by the Division of Federal Aid. During Fiscal Year 1999, more than \$43.5 million in Wildlife Restoration Grants were awarded to Region 3 states.

-USFWS Photo by Chuck Traxler



Program Description and Mission

The Division of Federal Aid works with state fish and wildlife agencies in mutually responsible, cooperative and creative grant partnership to protect and enhance fish, wildlife and habitat resources for present and future public benefit.

The major grant programs, Sport Fish Restoration and Wildlife Restoration, are recognized nationwide for the positive impact they have had on the quality of habitat and species management and the efficiency of program administration.

States use Federal Aid grants for work across the full spectrum of their management responsibilities. Grants account for one-fourth to one-third of the states' fish and wildlife management budgets. In Fiscal Year 1999, restoration grants for the eight states of Region 3 totaled \$77,608,089 — \$43.5 million in Wildlife Restoration grant funds, and more than \$34.1 million in Sport Fish Restoration grant funds. Region 3 states garnered approximately 21 percent of these grant funds apportioned nationally.

Other grant management programs administered by Federal Aid are the: Coastal Wetlands Planning, Protection and Restoration Act; Anadromous Fish Conservation Act (currently inactive); Partnerships for Wildlife Program; Section 6 of the Endangered Species Act; and Clean Vessel Act. While these grant programs are smaller in terms of dollars, they are major contributors to providing benefits to our fish and wildlife resources.

Summary of Fiscal Year 1999 Accomplishments

Audits An audit of U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Federal Aid Grants to the State of Iowa, Department of Natural Resources, Fish and Wildlife Division, for fiscal years 1995 and 1996, was completed and questioned costs of \$723,257 were resolved with the implementation of an installment repayment plan. The first of three installment payments was made in August 1999. Additionally, several measures have been implemented to improve the grant program with the State of Iowa including a new license tracking system to reduce the possibility of duplicate hunting license reporting. Both the State of Iowa staff and Fish and Wildlife staff felt the process was positive and that the program was strengthened.

Human Resources University of Minnesota student Ms. Joy Hiromasa, a new Student Career Education Program (SCEP) employee joined Federal Aid in May 1999. Joy wants to broaden her experience as a natural resource professional by understanding the Federal Aid program and partnership with the states. SCEP student Julie Morin graduated was added to the staff as Regional Outreach Coordinator for Federal Aid. Federal Aid also participated in the Tree Trust program in the Twin Cities area. This program brings handicapped students from the commuting area to a work site. Our program worked with a student on a project that required complex computer skills. The student provided scanning and project identification numbers, around 1,000 pages, to our lands program. This program has been a good partnership for both the Tree Trust program and Federal Aid.

In Brief Realty reviews were conducted in Michigan and Wisconsin. Post Award Compliance Reviews were accomplished in Illinois, Indiana and Ohio. Land acquisitions in Region 3 states totalled 4,699 acres of land purchased at a cost of more than \$5.9 million. Federal funds accounted for nearly 80 percent of the funds used for the States' land acquisitions during Fiscal Year 1999. Of the 27 projects selected nationally for funding through the Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program, eight projects belonged to Region 3. Projects include native prairie restoration and management in Missouri, prairie insect distribution—status and response to management, grassland bird habitat, common loon modeling, landscape management for prairie chickens, Mississippi River Bluff state natural areas, Kettle Moraine Oak opening state natural area, guidelines to excessive bat mortality, restoration of elk and turtle investigations on the Upper Mississippi River in Wisconsin, and aquatic insects study and special interest species of Grand River and Killbuck Marsh in Ohio.

State Successes

Minnesota Whitewater - 28,000 acre State Wildlife Management Area area is being managed, for not only wildlife, but for sport fish. This project, approximately 60 percent complete, involves the restoration of about a three-mile reach of the Main Branch of the Whitewater River in the vicinity of Dorer Pools 1,2, and 3. This reach of the river is about two miles upstream of where the Whitewater empties into the "Weaver bottoms" area of the Upper Mississippi River Wildlife & Fish Refuge. A number of tree revetments and rock weirs have been placed in strategic locations within the river channel to help stabilize the riverbanks and control water flows. Total cost of this river channel restoration project would be approximately \$510,000 and that primarily Sport Fish Restoration funds were involved.

Farmland Wildlife Population Research Office - A wildlife research facility 7 miles southeast of Madelia, Minnesota was renovated and remodeled using Wildlife Restoration funds for a total of \$457,867. This facility is responsible for providing information needed to manage major wildlife species in Minnesota's farmland zone which is comprised of all or parts of 74 counties and totals almost 49,000 miles. To accomplish this responsibility, the group's professional staff has the following responsibilities:

- Coordinate and interpret populations surveys
- Conduct research which provides wildlife management information.
- Develop techniques needed to monitor and manipulate wildlife populations, manage critical wildlife habitats, and reduce or prevent wildlife damage.
- Evaluate management practices and programs.
- Provides technical assistant and information to other DNR staff and the public

Missouri Lost Valley Fish Hatchery- with funding assistance from the Sport Fish Restoration Act, the Missouri Department of Conservation is constructing the largest fish hatchery ever constructed in Missouri. Centrally located in the State, in Benton County near Truman Lake and Warsaw, the Lost Valley Fish Hatchery is also believed to be the single largest Sport Fish Restoration capital development project in the 50 year history of the Federal program.

When finished, the 970-acre hatchery facility will include an

18,000 square foot fish production room, 78 fish production ponds totaling 68 acres, seven water-supply wells, and 15 miles of piping capable of delivering 3,500 gallons of water a minute. When fully operational, the new hatchery will have a full-time staff of 16. Visitors to Lost Valley will be able to view native Missouri fish in a 13,000 gallon aquarium in the visitor center.

The total facility is projected to cost \$21 million with Federal Aid in Sport Fish Restoration funds reimbursing 75 percent of the costs. The hatchery is also working on its interpretive center that will educate the public on various hatchery issues along with the Sport Fish Restoration Program.

Illinois Federal Aid helped provide safe and efficient fishing and boating access at three lake sites by constructing boat ramps, docks, restrooms, and parking lots that are accessible to disabled users. Fish habitat was also improved at numerous lakes throughout the state. Stocked fish species included brown trout, channel catfish, crappie, largemouth bass, muskellunge and walleye to improve fishing statewide.

Indiana Trained nearly 13,000 students in hunter and trapper ethics and safety.

Outreach A Region 3 Outreach meeting was coordinated and developed to bring together Federal Aid outreach staff and state representatives to highlight current research completed regarding Federal Aid outreach and barriers to participation. Two notable researchers traveled to the meeting to provide their current findings. In addition, the group was given a mini grant writing course and talked about the future and how outreach is done at the federal level and how we can assist the states.

The International Convention of Allied Sportfishing Trades was held in Chicago, Ill., this year. The Federal Aid National Outreach Team coordinated by this Region staffed a booth at this event. More than 74 countries and 70,000 attendees and 2,000-plus exhibitors were all under one roof. Many industry contacts were made discussing how the Federal Aid Sport Fish logo can be used on product packaging.

Federal Aid attended the fish and hunting expo at Cabela's in Owatonna, Minn. Bringing the message to the hunters/fishing public that support this program is an integral part of educating this segment of the public. Cabela's has also offered to put the "cycle of success" graphic on their end caps and kiosks which brings the message out on the floor to the customer.

Federal Aid developed a unique partnership with the Minnesota

Department of Natural Resources at the 1999 Minnesota State Fair. The agencies joined to create a hunter education exhibit, where youths ages 11-17 were given a mini course on hunter education that included firearms safety, and how and when to shoot. Following instruction, the youngsters were then tested by the Simulated Action Firearms Training System for Youth (SAFETY). Approximately 1,900 kids went through the exhibit in addition. The exhibit also generated comments from the State's hunting community. Hunting education instructors who saw the SAFETY system requested increased use of the system in hunter education programs, as well as continued strengthening of hunter education programs. The Minnesota DNR Commissioner indicated a desire to purchase up to four SAFETY systems for the State's use.

A series of articles were written by Jon Parker was published in the Minnesota Waterfowler Association magazine. The articles covered and educated the reader on where tax and license dollars go for the hunting and fishing enthusiast. An important segment of the Federal Aid audience was reached through those articles. It also very prominently displays the three logos (WR, SF & dual) in the article.

ASA's American Sportfishing, a newsletter which has a distribution of 10,000 has an editorial from Dave Pederson, Federal Aid Grant Coordinator. The article promotes the 50th anniversary of the Sport Fish Restoration program. This publication goes to the entire fishing tackle industry. It went a long way toward both setting the stage for the Sport Fish Restoration 50th Anniversary celebration, and our appeal to industry to use the logo

Goals for Fiscal Year 2000

Federal Aid will continue to:

Improve our grant process and completion of them in a timely manner.

Work in partnerships with State fish and wildlife agencies in a mutually responsible, cooperative and creative manner to protect and enhance fish, wildlife, and habitat resources for present and future public benefit.

Work towards implementation of FAIMS.

Improve its outreach efforts.

Provide training in grant writing

Conduct field reviews, 504 Realty reviews and desk audits.

Fiscal Year 1999 Accomplishments

Federal Aid Participates at Cabela's Spring Expo

Federal Aid

Federal Aid, External Affairs, Refuges, Private Lands, Migratory Birds, and North American Waterfowl Management Plan personnel staffed two booths at Cabela's Spring Expo in Owatonna, Minn., on March 19-22. The Expo was developed to offer manufacturers the opportunity to show off new products to customers. Federal Aid and External Affairs were invited in addition to the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources. Over 49,000 customers entered the store during this three day event. Several contacts were made with manufacturers and discussions of using the Sportfish and Wildlife Restoration logos were initiated. Partners: External Affairs Division of Refuges Endangered Species 3/19/99

Federal Aid Provides SAFETY Training

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Two training sessions were held April 6-8, 1999 on the Simulated Action Firearms Education Training for Youth (SAFETY) system. SAFETY simulators combine live-fire interactive scenarios teaching students basic and advanced hunter education skills. These include safe handling of firearms, hunter ethics and judgement, laws and regulations, game identification, life history and management. The system was purchased with the sole purpose of using it as a tool for hunter education. A total of 19 people were trained to operate the system from Iowa DNR, Wisconsin DNR, Refuges, Wet-

land Management Districts, the Regional Office, and Bureau of Indian Affairs. To date, 37 people have been trained to operate the system representing 8 Service field stations within the Region, 3 state agencies (IA, MN, WI), 3 Regional Office Divisions, MN Hunter Education Instructors, and the Bureau of Indian Affairs for a total of 16 different Partners. A lot of enthusiasm has been expressed towards using the system for hunter education.

4/30/99

Region 3 Clean Vessel Act Awards

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Region 3 states received a total of \$615,000 for FY99 in Clean Vessel Act Awards approved April 1 by the Service director. Six of the Region 3 states, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, Missouri, Ohio, and Wisconsin applied for funding this year. The total amount sought by these six states was \$786,000 and they received \$615,000 or 78 percent of the requested amount. Nationally, \$9,400,000 was awarded this year which represented 57 percent of the total requests. CVA grants are used to construct facilities, primarily pumpouts and dump stations, for proper disposal of sewage from recreational vessels. Funds are generally sub-granted by states to individual marinas for construction of these facilities. Marinas can receive up to 75 percent of the cost of installing eligible facilities. While many Region 3 waters will benefit from construction of these facilities, Lakes Michigan and Erie will be major recipients of facilities on the Great Lakes and for inland waters the Ohio River will receive many of the facilities. Some states still have uncommitted funds available

and there remain four more years of funding cycles under the current legislation. 4/30/99

Wisconsin DNR Begins Fish & Wildlife Strategic Plan

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Under their Federal Aid in Sport Fish & Wildlife Restoration Grant, the Wisconsin DNR will begin in August a major revision of its strategic plan for fish and wildlife management. The DNR recently issued a new statewide strategic plan for all resource areas under its jurisdiction. In August the DNR will assemble a broad team to step down the DNR-wide plan to a statewide strategic plan for fisheries resource management and a plan for wildlife resource management. The DNR will then further step down the strategic plans specific to the fish and wildlife resources of each of the 23 DNR Geographic Management Units (GMU).

7/30/99

ICAST and Federal Aid - A Successful Partnership

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More than 300 of the world's leading sportfishing manufacturers met at the International Convention of Allied Sportfishing Trades show held in Chicago, IL. The Service's Division of Federal Aid presented fish placards to eight manufacturers who currently use the logo and continued building relationships and awareness to the others. On July 9-11, the Division of Federal Aid exhibited at the International Convention of Allied Sportfishing Trades. More than 300 of the world's leading sportfishing manufacturers exhibited their full line of products. From rods and reels to hooks and boats, a complete spectrum of what the

industry has to offer was at the McCormick Convention Center in Chicago, Illinois. The Division of Federal Aid, developed by a cross-region team, put together a focused effort to motivate manufacturer's to use the logo on their product packaging. Fish placards were developed focusing on the manufacturer's that currently use the logo. A photo opportunity was developed to have both an official of the Fish and Wildlife Service along with the CEO of the company to show their close Partnership with the Program and use of the logo. Many contacts were made and discussions ensued regarding use of the logo and the benefit to the manufacturer's. Additional contact will be made after the show to re-confirm the need for using the logo. 7/30/99

Post-Award Compliance Review Completed for Illinois

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The Division of Federal Aid along with Region 3's accessibility expert, Drew McDermott, met with the Illinois State Federal Aid Coordinator to cover post-award compliance issues in October 1998, but the final report wasn't generated until August of 1999. Post Award compliance is decreed under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; The Age Discrimination Act of 1975; Title II of the American with Disabilities Act of 1990 and Department of the Interior implementing Regulation in 43 CFR Part 17. After visiting 13 sites, approximately 106 compliance violations were found and noted. Of the 106 noted violations, 103 were out of compli-

ance with ADAC guidelines. A report was sent to the State in August, and it has since reported that plans for corrections are being made. 8/10/99

Minnesota Federal Aid Grant Field Review

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Federal Aid employees Dick Tolbers, Niki DesRosier, and SCEP student Joy Hiromasa participated in a field review of nine State wildlife management areas/offices in the southern and west-central portions of Minnesota on August 17-19, 1999. Field reviews of Federal Aid sites allows those who are have federal grant responsibilities the opportunity to discuss with state grant administrators and project managers progress on the goals and objectives and to actually view the sites. Two sites were specifically recognized as success stories: Whitewater State Wildlife Management Area, and Farmland Wildlife Population Research Office. Whitewater WMA is a 28,000-acre State wildlife management area area being managed for not only wildlife but for sportfish. Some of the wildlife management activities observed included the restoration of grade stabilization ponds, a number of parking lots and informational signs, cooperative farming agreement tree/shrub plantings and wildlife food plots to name a few. The project is approximately 60 percent complete, it involves the restoration of about a 3-mile reach of the Main Branch of the Whitewater River in the vicinity of Dorer Pools 1, 2, and 3. This reach of the river is only about two miles upstream of where the Whitewater outlets into the Weaver Bottoms" area of the Upper Mississippi River Wildlife & Fish Refuge. A number

of tree revetments and rock weirs have been placed in strategic locations within the river channel to help stabilize the riverbanks and control water flows. 8/17/99

Unique Partnership Increases Awareness for Hunter Education

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The Service and Minnesota DNR partnered to educate young hunters during the Minnesota State Fair, August 26-September 6, 1999, in St. Paul, Minn. More than 2,000 youths participated in the hunter education experience at the Fair's DNR building. With parental permission, youths 11 through 17 moved through three stations staffed by Service and DNR volunteers. The youths received a short hunter education course before experiencing a simulated hunt on the Simulated Action Firearms Education Training for Youth (SAFETY) system, a computerized hunting simulator that helped reinforce and test knowledge gained from the hunter training. The training and simulated hunt took about 30 minutes. Parents did not hunt, but were encouraged to walk through the stations and help their child with the training. Before the simulated hunt, a Minnesota DNR Conservation Officer taught the youths about conservation violations, hunting safety, and the consequences of making for bad hunting decisions. 8/26/99